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From the PNMC Office

We are so deeply grateful for the years of service that **Barb Buxman** has given to loyally supporting the conference. Her daily involvement with office procedures will be missed! **With her retirement, the Portland PO Box will close at the end of October.** Please update your records. PNMC office correspondence should be directed to: PNMC, 22455 Finn Road, Sheridan, OR 97378. The phone number is also changing. For office inquiries, please contact Brenda Kauffman at 541-921-5866. The office@pnmc.org email address will remain active. We look forward to hearing from you!

Mennonite Action Active in the Pacific Northwest



My name is Greg Thiessen. I am a member of the Mennonite Action Washington State leadership team. I write to you from the unceded lands of the Duwamish, Suquamish, and Muckleshoot peoples, or what is commonly known as Seattle — a reasonably large city that I associate with evergreen trees and water, whether it be in the form of precipitation or the Duwamish River and Salish Sea. Upon writing this, I'm struck by the similarity to how those in Palestine talk about the land – dotted with olive trees and shaped by the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea.

I also associate Seattle with being removed from the Mennonite enclaves of the eastern time zone. I have watched Mennonite actions in D.C. from afar while trying to stay engaged with what's going on locally. As other urban Mennonites can likely attest, I often move about the city with a compartmentalized set of identities, deciding when, if, and where to let my religious side shine through. I can easily choose to attend rallies and protests for Palestinian and collective liberation as an anonymous individual, where my Mennonite and Christian identity doesn't have to be brought up and explained to others.

Choosing to join the core team of Mennonite Action WA was in part a choice to be an integrated person instead of a chameleon blending into my surroundings. It was also a choice to lean into the importance and value of community instilled in me since youth. As prison abolitionist and author Mariame Kaba says, "Everything that is worthwhile is done with other people."

In late September, we had the honor and privilege to host Mennonite Action co-directors, Nick Martin and Adam Ramer, for a time of grassroots organizing training, singing, food, art, and relationship building. Dozens of people volunteered to bring snacks, set up chairs and hymnals, lead singing, prepare art supplies, and even open their homes to host attendees from Portland, OR and Lancaster, PA.

People showed up (some for the first time to a Mennonite Action event) to sing hymns of prayer, hope, and rage. People showed up to learn and listen from Nick and Adam, engaging in the workshops with eagerness, vulnerability, and a focus on our common cause. And true to our diverse urban context, folks joined who did not come from our local Mennonite community, including several who heard about the weekend via the Christians for a Free Palestine network here in WA. The workshops and conversations on Saturday were truly enriched by the broader networks and personal experiences that they brought into the room.

On September 22, Mennonite Action was the catalyst for the joint worship of Seattle Mennonite Church and Evergreen Mennonite Church in Kirkland, WA. To my personal memory, this is the first time in perhaps decades that our two sibling congregations have gathered together in Kirkland to worship together. It indeed felt joyous to join with so many and feel the sense of being a larger Mennonite body. We listened to Adam give his debut sermon, which was pretty phenomenal. We witnessed the leadership and beauty of the children who wrote postcards to elected officials during their Sunday School time. And afterward we broke bread together, sharing some incredibly delicious falafel, hummus, and chicken from a local Palestinian restaurant.

Much of our work this weekend was grounded in the fact that *we* have power. That when we come together, we bring a wide range of skills, resources, relationships, understandings and experiences that magnify that power. And that when there are more people in the room, more horizons become visible.

My prayer is that over the horizon is the safety, dignity and well-being of all peoples. Together, our actions will carry us toward that future.

In peace and solidarity,
Greg Thiessen (he/him)

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Mountain View Mennonite Church

Upon the centennial celebration of Mountain View Mennonite Church in 2013, the seed of an idea for growing a community Peace Garden was planted. Over the last decade, the vision of what the Peace Garden could look like and be took on many different shapes and possibilities. First, we needed a waterline. We installed a pump in the field just east of the church with the Swan Range and rolling hills as its backdrop. Winters passed. Many seasons of the church passed as well. And one beloved visionary of the garden died, **Cathy Brenneman**. At her memorial, we passed out seeds. Her life and love following Jesus always brought new things to life. Even as we transitioned from Jeryl's leadership as our pastor, we knew the vision God placed in our hearts was ready to grow. We didn't have to go everything all at once. **Gardens grow little by little**. And so in the summer of 2023, a dozen of us ripped up sod, leveled the ground, while another poured a pad for a garden gazebo. Our MDS unit erected the shelter, as they do for so many all over the world. Then we selected five large trees for spring planting, trees that would be food for the birds of the field. Our first guest, a blue bird. Our next guests, many bicyclers pitching tents on the trail from Canada to Mexico, and one pair from Alaska on route to Argentina. Bicycling neighbors on extended outings in the community share thanks for the gift of a port-a-potty. And **Sunday, September 22**, we gathered in the cool morning air to worship together in the space long dreamt of and growing as gift to community. With our commitment to growing peace, we prayed and dedicated the space with an installation of our peace pole. During Sharing and Prayer, some noted they felt Cathy with us, how she would love this space. Others have given to remember loved ones in a space that speaks peace and makes room for the community. Responding to God's word and this prayer, together we lifted the ground and planted 64 crocuses to be the first to rise from the winter ground and shout for joy.



*"O God,
for too long the world has called us to war,
and our dead lie sprawled and bleeding across the centuries.
But you
break the bow and shatter the spear,
calling us to sow the seeds of peace
in the midst of despair.
In tenderness,
may we take the tiniest spouts and plant them
where they can safely grow into blossoms of hope. Amen."
-HWB 756, Linea Reimer Geiser*

[Oregon Mennonite Relief Sale](#) | October 12, 2024, Linn County Fairgrounds, Albany, OR.

Join us for a live auction*, kids' activities, baked goods, breakfast, lunch, and all kinds of booths: handmade goods, fabric & craft supplies, used books, and fair trade items. Proceeds support world relief through the work of MCC. *Auction includes quilts, experiences, handcrafted items, tools, furniture, and more. An additional online auction will also be available October 5-9. More information [here](#).

Camp CAMREC

Pitch in and enjoy fellowship at [Camp CAMREC's Fall Gathering, October 18-20, 2024](#). A variety of projects will be available for all ages, abilities, and interests. There will be plenty of time to catch up with friends, connect with new folks, get in a few card games and go on a hike or two! Visit www.camrec.org for more details or to register.



Drift Creek Camp

Please join us for the DCC Annual Members' Meeting and Family Camp, **November 1-3!** Casual festivities will begin on Friday evening as folks gather for food and fellowship. The members' meeting will take place Saturday morning at 10 with the benefit auction following lunch. On Sunday, former caretaker Sara Gibson will share her love of both mycology and community and how we are all intertwined. This is a great opportunity to support DCC! Register [here](#).

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & Other Organizations

Mennonite Church USA

Follow [this link](#) for the latest edition of *PeaceMail*. (The page also includes a "Translate" button for easy Spanish access.) Safe Church is presenting a webinar on **October 28 at 4pm PST** where Executive Conference Minister, Eric Massanari, will be speaking. Many congregations have established safety protection policies to proactively provide a secure and healthy environment for individuals of all ages to connect with God. However, when a person who is a known sex offender seeks to join the congregation, what steps should the congregation take? This webinar is the first of a three-part series. [Register here](#).

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Oct 21 (submissions due by 10/14)

Nov 4 (submissions due by 10/28)

Nov 18 (submissions due by 11/11)

Dec 2 (submissions due by 11/25)

If you would like to contribute, please send a brief announcement in Spanish & English with website links to brenda@pnmc.org. Our goal is to provide a valuable resource, not an In-Box jammer. If space is tight, we may omit announcements that are not as pertinent to PNMC. Announcements will run ONE time only, unless specified otherwise. *We welcome your feedback!*

For more PNMC updates: <http://pnmc.org> e-Bulletin Archives: <http://pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin>